

Division Chair Manual
Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology
Updated, January 2024

Division Chairs in SICB play two important roles: 1) they are the primary leader of the division they were elected to serve, and 2) they serve as a member of the society's Executive Committee, the advisory and decision-making committee that oversees SICB business.

The primary responsibilities of a Division Chair are enumerated below.

1. **Member of the SICB Executive Committee.** The Division Chair is a full member of the Executive Committee of the Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology, and, as such, is an officer in the Corporation (please see the SICB Constitution Article III: Administrative Organization). As a member of the Executive Committee, the Division Chair represents the division in all matters that come up for Executive Committee review, discussion, and vote.
 - a. **Executive Committee Meetings.** The Chair must attend the two Executive Committee meetings at each Annual Meeting, and any meetings called for other times of the year.
 - b. **Report to Executive Committee.** The Chair reports in writing on the activities of the division since the last Executive Committee meeting.
 - c. **Other Executive Committee Responsibilities.** There is much activity that occurs between annual meetings. Many items are transmitted to the Executive Committee members during the year that require comment or votes with specific deadlines. The Division Chair is expected to fully participate in the SICB Executive Committee actions, responding in a timely manner to requests for information and voting. The Chair should consult the other divisional officers or the full divisional membership when appropriate.
 - d. **Representation During Absence.** Division Chairs should consult the divisional bylaws for representation when they are unable to perform the duties of the Chair (e.g., when the divisional Chair must be absent from the SICB Executive Committee meeting).
2. **Meeting of Division Chairs at the Annual Meeting.** At each SICB annual meeting, the Division Chair is expected to attend the meeting of the Division Chairs convened by the President of SICB.
3. **Oversight of All Divisional Activities.** The divisional Chair is responsible for overseeing the divisional Executive Committee and all activities of the division. This oversight includes confirming that SICB's [Conflict of Interest policy](#) is followed in all divisional nominations and awards committees. In accordance with the policy, it is the Chair's responsibility to notify the SICB Secretary of any direct conflicts of interest, to oversee the implementation of this policy, and to record the resolution of any conflicts of interest.
4. **Divisional Governance.**
 - a. **Rules of Governance.** As with all organizations where there is frequent turnover in officers, it is important that rules of governance be followed. Division Chairs must be familiar with and comply with their divisional bylaws. Since Division Chairs are also members of the SICB Executive Committee, familiarity with the SICB Constitution and the SICB Bylaws is essential. It is the responsibility of the

Division Chair to ensure that division bylaws are compliant with the SICB Constitution and Bylaws. All bylaws are maintained on the [SICB Governance website](#).

- b. **Policies of SICB.** A number of [relevant policies](#) that have been approved by SICB are available on the SICB website under Governance > Internal Policies.
- c. **Division Members' Meeting.** It is the responsibility of the Chair to conduct the annual Members' Meeting of the Division, which takes place at the annual meeting of the SICB. At this meeting, the Chair is responsible for:
 - i. Setting the agenda for the meeting.
 - ii. Approving the minutes of the previous meeting.
 - iii. Receiving reports from committees.
 - iv. Calling for new business.
- d. **Officers and Elections.** The Division Chair is responsible for ensuring a continuation of governance by being up-to-date on the terms-of-office of divisional officers, by providing a slate of candidates for each available officer position in the appropriate annual elections, and helping with the transfer of responsibility when new officers are elected. [Election schedules](#) are posted on the SICB website under Governance > Elections > Schedule for upcoming elections. Elections are generally held only in the spring. In most divisions, elections are needed every year. Please note that Undergraduate and High School Student Members, Graduate Student Members, and Honorary Members may not hold office (SICB Constitution, Article II).

Nominating Committee. In the fall prior to the January annual meeting, Division Chairs appoint a nominating committee, in accordance with their divisional bylaws, to fill upcoming vacancies. Nominating committees may find it useful to review who has run for offices previously. This information can be found on the SICB website under Governance > Elections > List of candidates in past elections. Nominations must be completed by the end of January so that the Division Secretary can obtain the necessary information from the nominees for publication in the spring SICB Newsletter and inclusion on the ballot. Ballots are generally opened with the announcement of the Spring Newsletter in May and must be open for at least 30 days.

Follow-up with a Note of Thanks. The SICB Secretary will notify all divisional and SICB-wide candidates of the results of the election. Divisional Chairs should extend to all divisional candidates a note of thanks for running for office.

- e. **Student/Postdoctoral Affairs Committee.** The Division Chair will recommend a short list of individuals to the SICB President for appointment to the Student/Postdoctoral Affairs Committee of SICB. A list of committee members and the terms for which they have been appointed is available on the SICB website under [Committees](#).

SPDAC representatives are not officers of their respective divisions, although many divisions (in practice, in bylaws, or in both) include their SPDAC rep in their leadership team. Instead, SPDAC reps are members of a core society committee and their commitment to service to the society focuses on their committee work.

The bylaws state that the standard term of a SPDAC rep is three years. The Chair cannot end a SPDAC rep's term early. These terms are flexible, recognizing the transitional nature of the student and postdoc career stages. If a representative is graduating and not pursuing a postdoc, or leaving their postdoc for another position prior to the end of their term, a new representative will be appointed by the President, in consultation with the Chair.

- f. **Editorial Board Representation.** The Division Chair, in consultation with the divisional Executive Officers, will recommend to the Editor of *ICB* (and as requested, *IOB*) individuals who can represent the division on the Editorial Board of the society journal(s). In accordance with SICB bylaws, all members of the *ICB* and *IOB* editorial boards, including *ICB* divisional representatives, are appointed by the President upon nomination by the Editor and approval of the SICB Executive Committee (SICB Bylaws, Article XV, Sections 5 and 6). The term of the standard appointment is five years and the term of each individual is found on the SICB web site under [Committees](#). Recommendations for individuals to serve as a divisional representative should be made to the *ICB* Editor prior to the expiration of the term of the current divisional representative. The SICB President should be copied on this recommendation, and a current CV of the individual recommended must be provided.

Follow-up with a Note of Thanks. As with all service to the division, Division Chairs should thank individuals for their service upon their retirement from the *ICB* Editorial Board.

- g. **Other Committees and Appointments.** Divisions may have other committees, including *ad hoc* committees, or other assignments that require appointments. Provisions for appointments are usually spelled out in the divisional bylaws.
- h. **Advise on SICB Committee Appointments.** The Division Chair will advise the SICB President on the appointment of Society-wide committees (SICB Bylaws, Article XIII, Section 2). Such recommendations can be initiated at any time; normally a survey for such advice is conducted annually to solicit input from the SICB Executive Committee.
5. **Programs.** The Division Chair must communicate with the Division Program Officer (DPO) to help ensure that the annual meeting contains excellent symposia! Remember that the content of symposia creates the content of the SICB journal, *Integrative and Comparative Biology (ICB)*. *ICB*'s rating depends on interesting and forward-thinking papers that a greater audience will read, download, and cite. The DPO is responsible for much of the work in organizing divisional activities at the annual meeting, but this should be done with full knowledge and input from the Division Chair and the divisional Executive Committee.
6. **Best Student Presentations.** SICB has established [society-wide guidelines for Best Student Presentations](#) that are available on the Awards website. These guidelines provide information on the abstract submission process, the rubric for presentation evaluation, and the conflict of interest policy. Detailed explanations of the full process, including the tasks for which each divisional officer bears responsibility, [are provided here](#). **Before each annual meeting, the Division Chair will recruit and appoint**

judges to evaluate student talks and posters for divisional Best Student Presentations awards.

Most divisions provide additional division-specific policies (e.g., information on extended abstract submission, special sessions for BSP presentations), that are stated on the BSP website. If the division wishes to amend their [division-specific BSP policies](#), this website must be updated (in consultation with the SICB Secretary) before abstract submission opens for the next annual meeting (generally in early July).

7. **Divisional Website.** Each division has a website on the SICB website (available at <https://sicb.org/divisions/>). Important information appears on these pages and it is the division's responsibility to see that the information is kept up-to-date. The Division Secretary can take care of revising the information, working with the SICB Secretary and SICB Webmaster, but the Division Chair should take ownership of the divisional pages.
8. **Budgets.** Division Chairs are responsible for ensuring that the divisional budgets are properly spent, and that any requests for extra divisional support are properly documented and justified, and forwarded to the SICB Finance Committee in a timely manner. All divisions have discretionary funds, and Division Chairs should consult with the Divisional Executive Committee on how these funds are to be used.
9. **Communications.**
 - a. **Newsletters.** Division Chairs should take ownership of all Society Newsletter entries from the division, through active interaction with the Division Secretary and other divisional officers. The Spring and Fall Newsletters are an important archive of the history of all division activities, and a primary way we communicate with our members. The Chair ensures that appropriate deadlines are met, and ensures that the content of Newsletter entries adequately represent divisional activities and calendar events.
 - b. **Member Updates.** SICB will regularly communicate with the membership through Monthly Member Updates, coordinated by the Communications Editor. Division Chairs may communicate specific information to the society membership through these Member Updates.
 - c. **Email Blasts.** Division Chairs may send a request to the SICB Secretary or Communications Editor to email any group of divisional members (all members, postdocs only, members who live near the annual meeting location, etc.) Email blast requests require approximately 5 days to process.
 - d. **Email Addresses.** Email addresses have been set up by SICB for each Division Chair and other divisional officers. These addresses are designed to automatically forward email sent to them to the user's professional address. Signing into your officer email account on Google will provide you with access to the division's archive of documents. A complete list of email addresses is found on the SICB web site Governance > Officer and Committee Email Contacts, [here](#).